

Sacramento schools propose administrative cuts

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Sacramento City Unified School District officials, who need to cut an estimated \$30 million from their budget for next year, unveiled a plan Thursday night that leans heavily on central administration and cuts to discretionary programs.

Superintendent Jonathan Raymond said he wants district administrators to "lead the way" and has recommended three furlough days for his top staff and unrepresented employees and \$5.95 million in other reductions in the district's central office.

"I would not ask other employees to make sacrifices unless we at central office are leading by example," Raymond said in a prepared statement. "These are difficult times, but our mission is the education of children and that has to be our first priority, painful as these proposals are."

The proposed cuts include \$15 million from discretionary programs, including class-size reduction, vocational education programs, adult education and deferred maintenance. Included in the \$5.95 million in reductions from the central office: \$900,000 from administrative services; \$1.9 million from operations and maintenance offices; \$2.2 million from education services; \$662,000 from human resources; and the superintendent will cut his operating budget by \$288,000.

Raymond called the balance of the proposed budget cuts "options of last resort" that can be lessened or eliminated if the district can secure concessions from its employee unions. Among those possible cuts: increasing class size from 25 to 30 at the K-3 level that would result in the loss of 91 full-time equivalent teachers for a savings of \$4.2 million. Also proposed is reduced counselors by 26 full-time equivalents and 4.6 fulltime equivalent psychologists for a savings of \$2.59 million.

The school board is expected to vote on the proposed cuts at its March 4 meeting.

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